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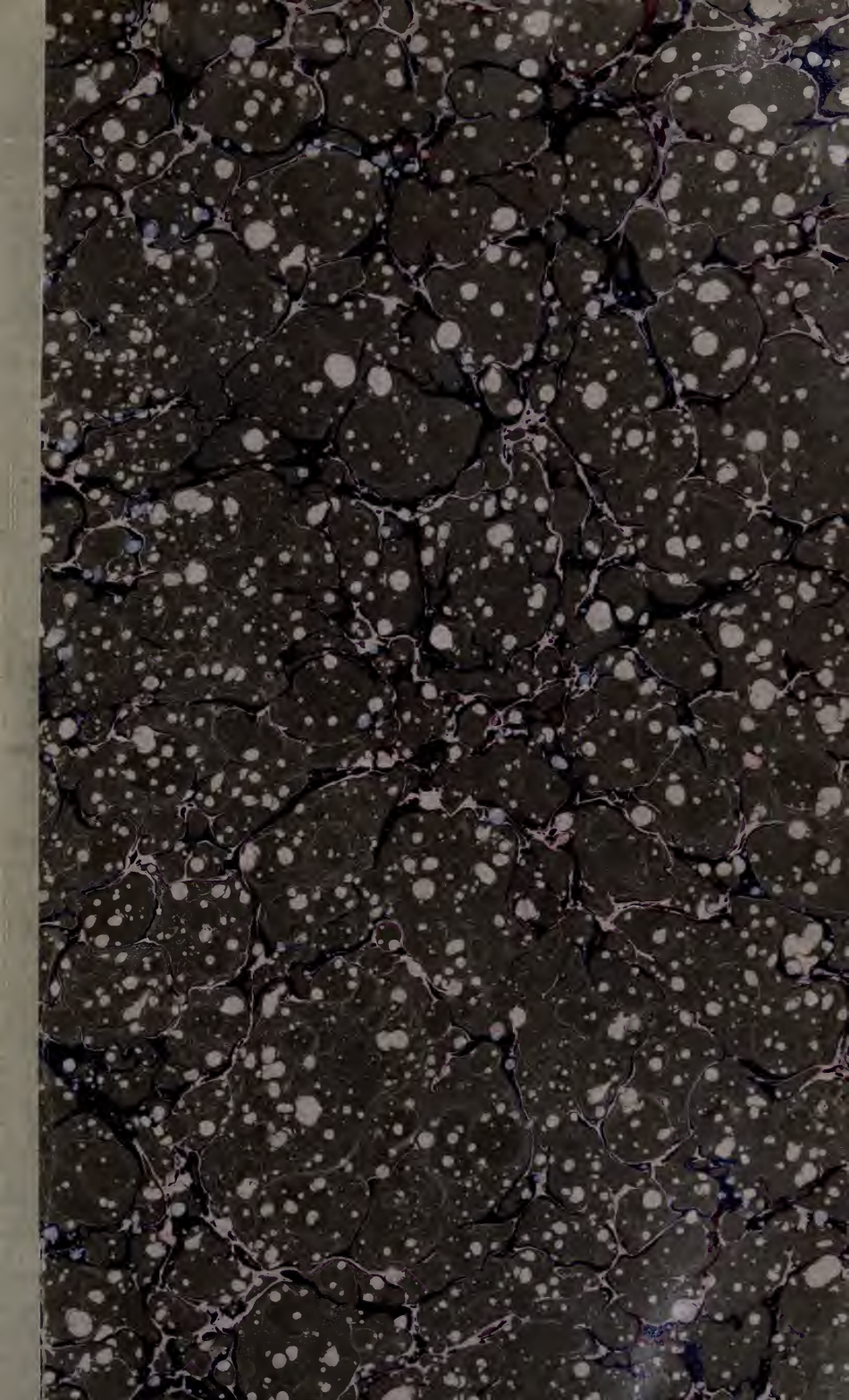


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THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AND
THE AMERICAN MAN

SECOND COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS, LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY,
MAY 31, 1893

By GEORGE ELLIOTT HOWARD

Professor of History, Leland Stanford Junior University



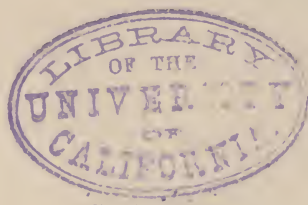
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THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AND THE AMERICAN MAN.

The first fruit of the Italian Renaissance was the revelation of a new world. In the fourth centennial of that event, the seed planted by the humanists seems about to yield its richest harvest. What if, in the end, it should fall out that American soil has produced the choicest vintage! There is a pervading half-consciousness that in our generation intellectual development has entered a phase of surpassing interest. Surely this can not be the result of mere vain-gloriousness. On the contrary, is it not the gathering of fruit after many days? Stated in most general form, the significance of our epoch appears to be that humanism is at length triumphant in the realm of thought; and it is a humanism deeper in meaning, vaster in its sweep, than anything of which Reuchlin, Erasmus, or even Mirandola ever dreamed. To realize the truth of this statement, three questions arise: (1) What is the nature of the new humanism and how is it influencing our conception of culture? (2) What must be the character of the American university through which this conception may best find expression? (3) What, accordingly, is the essential function which the American university is called upon to perform?

A brief consideration of these topics would not seem to be wholly out of place on the second commencement of an institution whose distinguishing mark is the thoroughness with which it has been informed by the very spirit of the Nineteenth Century Renaissance.

I.—THE NEW HUMANISM.

A glance at the history of civilization reveals the fact that the humanization of learning may be taken as a fair measure of intellectual progress. The more culture has recognized duty to society as its proper end, the more efficient it has become. The more practical or utilitarian, in this sense, has been its avowed purpose, the greater has been its power to stimulate even spiritual growth. Yet this interpretation is precisely contrary to the dogma which has all the time prevailed; perhaps even now it may be rejected as rank heresy. Nevertheless, a mere re-statement of the proposition gives us a glimpse of its proof. From the fifth century to the nineteenth, the chief obstacle to mental advancement has been a false definition of culture and a narrow oligarchy of studies. To broaden the curriculum and deepen the purpose of learning has been the never-ending task of the educational reformer.

Such was the significance of the Fifteenth Century Renaissance. Two things the world owes to the humanists, particularly to that glorious band which gathered at the court of Lorenzo de' Medici: the emancipation of thought and the secularization of learning. On the one hand, they broke the chains of scholastic logic; on the other, they went back two thousand years to drink at the fountain of Hellenic culture. As if touched by the water of life asceticism was transformed into beauty. To his surprise man found that he possessed a sense of beauty and that its gratification was not altogether sinful. Hitherto ugliness had been deified. Not humanism but superhumanism dominated thought. Truly, in the middle ages, the conditions were not favorable to dynamic sociology. Society did not consciously strive to force itself upward. Good men and women did not plant university settlements nor organize charities. They concealed themselves in monasteries or fled to the caves of the desert in order to shun their kind. To exalt the dignity of man would have been a dangerous heresy.

The body was despised. At all hazards the soul must be saved from the dæmons of the air and the mysterious forces of nature which ever beset it. Humanity was starved until the wizened spirit was scarcely worth the trouble of salvation. The earth, or rather the known fragment of it, was looked upon as the center of the universe; and yet it existed but as a sort of penal island for imprisoned souls. *Indocti cælum rapiunt*, says Augustine: "The ignorant shall take the Kingdom of Heaven."¹ Strange paradox is mediæval man! His spirit pierces the clouds to touch the stars, while his feet are in the mire. Mystical spiritualism and sensual materialism are his two pitiless masters.

At length, in the twelfth century, the gloom was broken by the faint twilight of the Renaissance. Then the first universities were born, and they were born under a favorable star; for they came in response to a social need: the demand for more practical help from the schools in the business of life; for specialization, particularly in medicine and law. Unfortunately, however, the University of Paris, mother of Oxford and Cambridge, and hence grandmother of a vast progeny of American schools, fell under the sway of scholastic theology and her handmaid logic. Thus was laid the foundation of that monastic domination of thought which has exerted so disastrous an influence on the history of higher education throughout the world. The schoolman was the slave of authority. In the vain attempt to serve Aristotle and the Pope, he became a pounder of dead straw. For centuries the halls of learning resounded with the wordy battles of the Nominalists and Realists, presenting a spectacle of mental gymnastics which ought to warm the hearts of all lovers of "pure discipline." Such was not the impression made upon old John of Salisbury. "To wear out a life in things of this kind," he declared in 1182, "is to work, teach, and do nothing."²

¹ West, *Alcuin*, p. 11.

² Mullinger, *Cambridge*, Vol. I, pp. 5-7.

The humanist, unlike the schoolman, was filled with a deep respect for human nature, with a pious reverence for all which man has at any time achieved in thought. He worshipped Cicero and Plato because he believed that only in their works could *then* be discovered the best products of the human mind. This fact reveals at once his weakness and his strength. His face was set towards the past. Like the ingenuous schoolboy, he rejoiced in the beautiful lesson which he conned. But he had little creative power; and he could not clearly conceive of culture as comprehending the mastery of Nature's forces in the service of living men and women.

It was enough that the Fifteenth Century Renaissance was able to interest the mind in earthly things. To complete the emancipation of thought and make it effective in widening the boundaries of knowledge was the higher task reserved for the humanists of the eighteenth century. For everywhere, subsequent to the Reformation, learning had sunk into the double slavery of theology and classicism. In England, proscription of thought had well-nigh depopulated the universities. In Germany, according to Professor Mullinger, "the fierce bigotry and ceaseless controversies evoked by the promulgation of Lutheran or Calvinistic doctrine, converted what otherwise might have become the tranquil abode of the muses into gloomy fortresses of sectarianism."¹ In France, the voice of the Renaissance was stifled in flames lighted by the Inquisition. Then came that portentous awakening preceding the French Revolution. Voltaire, like some inspired demon from the pit, struck down the two-fold despotism of priest and pedant and gained for man once more the right to think. Diderot and the Encyclopædists suggested in countless ways how to make thought useful. The Encyclopædia, with its eleven volumes of beautiful engravings, is itself a splendid monu-

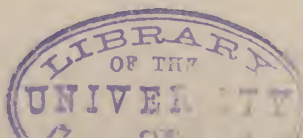
¹ Mullinger, *Universities*, in *Ency. Brit.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 844; *University of Cambridge*, Vol. I., p. 407; ff., Vol. II, p. 102.

ment to peaceful industry and the useful arts. All thought seemed to be transfused with utilitarianism. As a consequence, a tremendous impulse was given to scientific discovery. The eighteenth century may fairly be regarded as the cradle of comparative science. Then, for instance, was laid or reconstructed the foundations of botany, zoölogy, physiology, and anatomy ; of chemistry, geology, and mineralogy ; of physics, including light, sound, and heat ; of astronomy and mathematics, including mechanics and the calculus ; of ethics, psychology, and history. Hitherto man had been taught that he was the center of the universe for whose sole use it was created. Now his conceit received a sharp rebuke. It was as if the mind "imbued with these new truths," to borrow the illustration of Taine,¹ were placed suddenly upon the orbit of Saturn ; and was able for the first time to behold, among the countless worlds and suns moving in space, the earth in all its relative littleness and the human animal an insignificant speck upon it. "A mite," says the contemporary Buffon, "that would consider itself the center of all things would be grotesque, and therefore it is essential that an insect almost infinitely small should not show conceit almost infinitely great."² Here is that humility which betokens the coming of wisdom—that meekness which clothes the true scientist as in a garment.

The humanism of the eighteenth century is broader and deeper than that of the fifteenth. Instead of youthful curiosity and desire for beauty, there is the rational joy of a fuller intellectual freedom, the fierce delight of creative research in the interest of men. But the vision of the humanist was still circumscribed. Little by little the chart of nature was unrolled before his delighted eyes ; mystery after mystery was made plain ; principle after principle was demonstrated. Yet to him was not revealed that supreme law which pervades all things, embracing earth and stars,

¹ *Ancient Regime*, p. 175.

² Taine, *Ancient Regime*, p. 175.



mind and matter, man and society, in one divine harmony of development. For it is certain, coming as it did after so vast an impulse had been given to comparative science, that the discovery of the law of evolution renders the Nineteenth Century Renaissance the most significant crisis in human history. In a vague way, of course, everyone feels this. But it is not so sure that everyone has earnestly tried to realize for himself the radical change which the doctrine of evolution is making in our fundamental conception of culture—in our relative appreciation of the various branches of knowledge. Suddenly it is perceived that a great problem has been solved, upon which the intellect has been unconsciously engaged for centuries, and towards whose solution each “new birth” has brought it a little nearer: the real nature of man and his proper place in the universe. It seems as if the mind had been staggered by a powerful shock; forced to pause in order to “take stock” of its entire possessions; to scrutinize all its categories of knowledge, criticize all its dearest foibles and fondest prejudices, remould all its religious, ethical, or psychical ideas. Something has happened in the mental world similar to that which took place on a much smaller scale when the glass of Galileo disclosed the solar system of Copernicus. The beautiful but artificial scaffolding of Ptolemy had to be torn down regardless of expense; and the astronomer was forced to accept the verity to which his senses bore witness.

The crisis is of supreme interest for our present subject; because, unless I greatly err, it is determining the character of the modern university. Thus, there is a growing tendency to abandon the traditional assumption that there is an essential difference in the scholastic value of studies. The aristocracy of letters, as a privileged order, is doomed; though it is not dying easily nor by any means in peace. The fact is, a new test of scholastic fitness has arisen: the test of *life*. Besides it is perceived that when rightly viewed there is not a dead thing in the broad universe. All things are in process of development. The contemplation

of life imparts vitality to the studying mind. How utterly trivial appears the miracle of fiat creation when compared with the divine mystery of eternal growth! Hence whole departments of knowledge, hitherto unheard of in the schools, have received recognition. Within the past two decades, what a host of strange names have made their appearance! Every year the differentiation goes on. Almost every semester some new department is born. Old subjects which were thought dead have turned out to be but sleeping. Thus philosophy and the classics, subjected to the comparative method, are being made more productive than ever before for social good. Furthermore, in the new light, what surprising relationships, what unsuspected affinities, are being disclosed! Who would have imagined, a short time ago, that physics and physiology were the sisters of psychology; or that ethics should consort with economics and sociology in the same laboratory; or that a professor of institutional history should commend to his pupils biology as a minor subject? Yet all these things have really happened. Indeed, only since Darwin and Spencer, has it been possible to discover the essential kinship of the various branches of knowledge. Consequently every scheme for the classification of the sciences, from Aristotle to Bacon, and from Bacon to Comte, has been utterly confounded. An important mark of the new humanism is the universality of its sympathy. It seems as if we should more than realize the dream of Lionardo da Vinci, whose fancy loved to dwell upon the mysterious borderland between the human soul and the lower life of beasts and plants. Already we hear of "animal psychology" and "animal ethics." Man is not quite so arrogant in the assertion of his intellectual supremacy; and the human brute is sometimes restrained from torturing the beast, his more innocent brother. Nay, more, the audacious eye of science is already scanning the boundary-line between so-called sentient and inorganic things: who shall dare to say what it may not hereafter see?

The disclosure of the real nature of human society is

having a remarkable effect upon our ideas as to the true purpose of learning. During all the ages, from Socrates to the Concord School, "know thyself" has been the praiseworthy recipe of philosophy. Some people have ever fancied that they possessed such knowledge. But in reality man has hardly been on speaking terms with himself until recently an introduction took place in the laboratory of science. The result is marvelous. Man beholds himself in acutual process of evolution. His ideas and passions, his virtues and vices, are the product of environment, selection, and heredity. He perceives that social institutions are living beings as much as are plants and animals. They are the outward expression of his own thoughts, the resultant or residuum of his own conduct, growing with his growth and decaying with his decay. Furthermore, society itself is seen to be a vast organization, a complex animal, obeying the same law as do individuals or "self-conscious" cells which compose it. Therefore, since the conditions of social growth and decay may be understood, it is inevitable that sociology should become dynamic. Perceiving that our destiny is pretty largely in our own hands, we are beginning to realize that it is the supreme function of culture to lift humanity upward. At last society has become self-conscious. This is the philosophy of the new utilitarianism; this, the secret of the humanism of the Nineteenth Century Renaissance.¹

II.—THE NEW AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

We are now ready for the second question suggested for our consideration: What must be the character of the American university through which for the American man this new humanism may best find expression? What shall its purpose be? What its organism? In the first place, it is clear, I think, that the university of the future must

¹ In this connection Lester F. Ward's *Dynamic Sociology* should be read.

become the representative of dynamic culture. The new idea of culture must embrace more and more of those practical arts which are useful to men. I very much suspect that the well-meant declaration of Aristotle that "all paid employments" are vulgar, rendering the soul of a freeman unfit for the practice of virtue,¹ has proved an illusion and a snare. At the risk of being called a philistine, I must confess to an abiding fear that all this agonized striving after "pure science," "knowledge for its own sake," this superfine spirituality of culture, has practically turned out to be very much of a humbug. The motive, of course, is pure; so was that of the schoolmen. Do not imagine that I have any sympathy with those sordid motives which are all too prevalent amongst us. Doubtless the tendency to look upon education as a mere tool for money-getting is our besetting sin. Yet I fancy that purely abstract or subjective culture, as commonly understood, is not so very much less selfish than is the prostitution of learning in the service of mammon. By all means let us have knowledge for its own sake. But is there any real knowledge which does not embrace a perception of its power, its potentiality for social good? Paradoxical as it may appear, it is this objective element which has given to modern science a quickening spirit. It is necessary, then, that a new definition of academic culture should be set up. Just what that definition shall be I will not presume to say. But of one thing I feel sure, it must comprehend as its vital element the possession of social power. It will not necessarily include the college don "exhaling culture from his finger-tips"; nor will it exclude such philistines as Shakespeare and Franklin, Washington and Lincoln.

I am also persuaded that the time has come for a reorganization of the university; for a simplification of its machinery, by setting it free from the restraint of ancient forms. A distinguished professor has recently declared that

¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, VIII, 2: Jowett, Vol. I, p. 245.

"there is in the United States, as yet, not a single university in the sense attached to this word by Europeans. All the American institutions bearing this name," he adds, "are either compounds of college and university—the university, as an aftergrowth, figuring still to some extent as a kind of annex or excrescence of the college—or hybrids of college and university, or finally, a torso of a university. An institution, wholly detached from the school-work done by colleges, and containing all the four faculties organically connected to a *universitas literarum*, does not exist."¹ I have no desire to conceal or to extenuate our national faults. The propagation of starveling "universities" is fast becoming a public wrong, a positive danger to our society. But it is highly necessary that we should not suffer the abuses to conceal from our eyes the merits of the American system. I must emphatically decline the pattern which Dr. Von Holst has tendered us. Why should America have a university in the European sense? It is not by the slavish imitation of foreign models, so far as essential type is concerned, that a true university can be created by any people. Such a university must be the free outgrowth of national thought and national experience. It is a plain historical fact that education in this country has been influenced entirely too much by European traditions. The ecclesiastical bias, the narrow curriculum, and the antiquated machinery of our colleges, as already suggested, are our indirect heritage from the university of Paris, from which also was derived the organism of the German universities. Few chapters in human history are more curious or more humiliating than the stolid resistance which so-called academic learning has persistently offered to new ideas. In every phase the Renaissance has accomplished itself in spite rather than through the aid of the schools. It is not so much the reproach of the ancients

¹Von Holst, *The Need of Universities in the United States*, in *Educational Review*, Feb., 1893, p. 113.

that they saw so little as it is the shame of the moderns that they have not seen more.

But I am not unminful of the debt which modern thought owes to the Germans. They were the first, in large measure, to grasp the idea of the new humanism. They have taught the world the value of academic freedom; the importance of vast endowment; the possibilities of thoroughness, and especially the supreme truth that it takes great men to make a great university. Moreover, it is largely through the influence of scholars trained in Germany, that higher education in this country is being transformed. Nevertheless, the German system is not the ideal for us. Why, for instance, should we perpetuate its machinery? Why should we hamper ourselves with the four faculties of mediæval Paris? Why should we not have five, or ten, or thirty faculties? For the spirit of the Nineteenth Century Renaissance is absolute freedom in teaching and in taking that which is taught. This requires two things: free differentiation of departments and free election of studies. The four faculties rest upon an artificial classification of knowledge. The time has come to make the individual science the unit of organization; and when that is done the entire mediæval scaffolding falls to the ground.

The spirit of the times requires also that we should go one step further. There must be not only free election and free differentiation, but complete equality of studies. And here, let me say, that I sincerely believe that the members of this university are at this moment enjoying a rare privilege. They are making history of singular interest: setting up a mile-post, upon which, unless I greatly mistake, the coming generations will look back with growing appreciation. Two more significant innovations cannot be found in the whole history of higher education than the adoption of the department-unit of organization and the principle of free election, even of so-called professional¹ studies, from the

¹ In the Leland Stanford Junior University, Law may be taken as

very beginning of the collegiate years. Thus, evidently, two difficulties have at once been solved for us. We shall never, I trust, be vexed by the question of shortening the academic curriculum; nor with the still graver problem of how to raise the standard of professional study. But will not so much freedom induce narrowness, premature specialization? The question may be answered by another: Does not everything, after all, depend upon the sort of men of which the faculty is composed? For one, I would much rather trust for guidance in the choice of studies to the trained judgment of individual professors, fit for their places, than to the most ingenious procrustean bed ever contrived by an academic council. This reminds me of a popular fallacy. It is commonly assumed that the small college, whatever its defects, has one compensating advantage over the university: closer intimacy between student and teacher. This is by no means necessarily true. The new American university will rest upon the very principle of rational co-operation between the leader and his followers. What intellectual intimacy, for instance, can be closer, more searching, than that afforded by the modern *Seminär*, the peculiar sanctuary of the university? And to this every student may look forward as to the fitting crown of his labor.

It appears, then, when its possibilities are tested, that we have no great reason to be ashamed of our much-abused "compound of college and university." In fact, the American plan has an obvious advantage over the German. For the glaring defect of the gymnasial-university system is the lack of continuity in spirit and in method. Between the excessive restriction and narrowness of the gymnasium and the extreme liberty of the university, the average

a "major" study by undergraduates. The requirements for admission, the conditions as to supplementary work, the degree given (Bachelor of Arts), and the period of study (four years) are precisely the same as for the usual academic subjects. Other so-called "professional" studies will doubtless be treated in the same way.

student wastes a considerable portion of his scholastic life. This is bad economy and worse philosophy. By the American system, on the other hand, harmonious development may be secured. Liberty and specialization begin in the college years, the equivalent of the gymnasium. Throughout his course, the student is guided by uniform method and constant purpose. Instruction is more practical; the relation of pupil and teacher more rational. Why should there not be a compound of college and university? Whether the seven years of training shall be given in one institution or in two, the second beginning where the first leaves off, is mainly a matter of expediency; though, on the ground both of economy and principle, there is much to be said in favor of concentration.

The vital question, therefore, is not whether we have already *realized* the highest conceivable idea of a university, but whether we *possess* the right ideal for us. Too much national self-pride is a grievous fault; but too little self-respect is worse; and, in my judgment, proper self-respect requires that a courageous word should now be spoken. In its relative capacity, when fully developed, to satisfy the needs of the society which has called it into being, the new American university—simple in structure and free in spirit, with a standard of attainment which will adjust itself to the changing needs of an advancing civilization, at once the crown and the inspiration of a noble system of public schools—this institution, in its possibilities, stands absolutely without a peer.

III.—FUNCTION OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

Such, then, as I conceive it, is the true purpose of academic culture and such the nature of the organism through which that purpose must be realized. Let us next notice briefly the essential function which the American university is called upon to perform. That function, it seems to me, is to direct self-conscious society in the dual task of self-

regeneration and self-development; and of its two elements, regeneration is the stringent necessity of the present hour. What an amazing prospect opens up before the young man or woman who is ready to choose a place in the common laboratory of society! The first effect upon the earnest soul is appalling, overwhelming. Never before have so many difficult problems pressed forward for solution; and never before has there been so great need of the conservative boldness of trained minds. The fountains of the great deep are broken up. Wisely or unwisely all things sacred or profane are being called in question. It seems, sometimes, as if the very foundations of our social structure would have to be relaid.

Hitherto man has seemed to fancy that his own habits as a social animal were, somehow or other, placed outside the sphere of voluntary improvement. In some inscrutable way, they had come into existence, ready-made, and hence they were divine. Thus, in the seventeenth century, how fierce a struggle was required to overthrow the prerogative of kings; and, in the eighteenth, how sore was the travail when democracy was born! A few years ago, to doubt the perfection of the family or to question the holiness of marriage, under any conditions, even as defined in the English common law, would have been as rank heresy as to discredit the Trinity. Now there are those who fiercely cry out against the legalized bondage of sex as a survival of patriarchal barbarism; and demand that the sanctified marital prerogative shall no longer be made a cloak for tyranny and lust nor a source of racial degeneration. The problem of marriage and divorce is one which demands the earnest attention of the university; for only the trained specialist will be able to show how to remedy our confused matrimonial laws, or to tell us whether the alarming increase in the number of divorces is a sign of social reform or of moral decay.

Similar problems are growing out of the institution of property. To Blackstone, and to thousands before him and

since, the right of property in land or goods appears as the gift of heaven. By Mill and philosophers of his school, it is regarded as the necessary balance-wheel of human nature. Since the French Revolution, it is found in nearly every bill of inalienable human rights. But of late what intrusive cavillings have arisen! Is property in land, after all, a social blunder? Shall we nationalize it and thus return to the principle of early Aryan Communism? Is it really true or not that the accumulation of vast areas of land in the hands of individuals or corporations is one of the most imminent dangers which threaten our republic, and should it be prevented by legislation? Is it literally true that the love of money is the root of all evil? There are those among us who dream that the fortunate children of coming centuries, from the superior vantage ground of their higher evolution, will look back in pitying wonder to an age when the hope of gain was the chief incentive of ambition.

Manifestly these are very serious questions; and, if we would avoid disaster, it is highly necessary that no mistake shall be made in their solution. Moreover, if property is on trial, so also is our entire fiscal and monetary apparatus. Our system of taxation is clumsy and wasteful in method, perhaps false in theory. The absurdly complex and heterogeneous systems of coinage and the awkward and expensive methods of specie exchange, existing among nations, are a discredit to their morality and business sense.¹ Then, how very little the world really knows about money. What is its true character? What is its proper basis? What ratio should it bear to the volume of business transacted? What is its relation to capital? Can the Government safely come to the aid of the individual by loaning him money at low interest on mortgage security? Clearly here is plenty of hard work cut out for both statesman and scholar.

¹See President Andrews' *Money as an International Question*, in *Atlantic*, April, 1893, pp. 543-511.

But the half has not yet been told. How utterly our dearest social theories are being shattered by the hand of science! Thus, charity, the sweetest flower of human sympathy, is indeed a noble virtue. No wonder that in all ages it has been made the touchstone of piety and devotion. Yet it is the simple truth that undisciplined charity has bred the very evil which it has hoped to cure. Scarcely anything has ever given sentiment so powerful a shock as the perception that indiscriminate alms-giving has nourished vagrancy, encouraged vice, and fattened impostors on the bread of the deserving poor.

This is not the only social blunder which we have committed. The dreadful moral diseases tolerated by our boasted Christian civilization should cause us to bow in shame before intelligent paganism. The "social evil" did not perish with Sodom nor yet with Syrian Antioch. Incredible as it may seem, there are laws upon our statute-books whose secret purpose is to shield the lecher and betray the feet of unwary innocence into the snare of the spoiler. Infanticide did not end with ancient Rome. The abomination of so-called "baby-farming" in London—the systematic smothering of unwanted infants in the cloak of benevolence—has recently been likened to the horrid child-sacrifices rendered to the Carthaginian Moloch;¹ and through the "sweating system" existing in our great cities, the sanguinary god is harvesting his victims with still more insidious art. Civilization has come to a pretty pass when the conscientious man or woman will scruple to wear the shop-made garment, lest it should bring with it the curse of the starving or have been baptized in the tears of the widow and the fatherless! Truly, there is little need that the youth, whose heart is fired with the zeal of the missionary or the martyr, should fix his eyes upon distant Africa. In "Darkest America" there is ample scope for all his self-sacrifice and devotion.

¹ See the article *Moloch in England*: *Westminster Review*, March, 1893, pp. 239-246.

It is high time also for political regeneration. In this work, especially, there is urgent need of the trained mind of the scholar. If we are faithful to our trust, I verily believe that the most precious legacy of the nineteenth century to the twentieth will be our representative democracy. Thus far we have succeeded beyond all expectation. In population, wealth, and even culture, we have advanced with amazing strides. The true patriot will not despair of the republic. But he must not deceive himself. The hour of our severest trial is at hand. The constructive work of the future must consist of the creation of an efficient system of administration. Old issues are dead and new issues have arisen. Our statesmen cannot too soon realize that it should be the first duty of the patriot to relieve our country of the reproach of being a quarter of a century behind other nations in public business methods. To accomplish this task, they must avail themselves of the skill of specialists trained in the schools. In fact, it is one of the most encouraging signs of the times that men of letters and men of science are more and more frequently called into the councils of State. Reform must go hand in hand with reorganization. Politics must be purified, the political machine destroyed. Yet there is no use in resisting the machine until its motive power is cut off; and the well-nigh inexhaustible source of its energy is the spoils system. This is the perennial spring of our national ills; the great fountain head from which flows out a black stream to corrupt the body politic. The spoils system is as deep a disgrace to the nation and as deadly an enemy of our representative democracy as was the institution of slavery; and probably it has already cost us as much in money and possibly more in human lives. Every member of the social body suffers from its contamination. It is not a thing to boast of, for instance, that our cities are the dirtiest, the most expensive, and the worst governed in Christendom. They are the centers of our population, wealth and refinement; yet we have handed them over to the tender mercies

of the ward "boss" and the precinct "heeler." They are the drawing rooms of the nation; yet their sanitary arrangements are deadly beyond belief. Take a single significant fact. If a law as good as the English Public Health Act could be enforced in this country, supplemented as wisely by local co-operation, I estimate that not less than fifty thousand deaths would be prevented every year.¹ That is to say, within fifteen years, our cities are probably murdering more human beings than fell on all the battlefields of the Civil War.

Another striking illustration of the pernicious influence of the political machine is afforded by our maltreatment of criminals. Science has already demonstrated that crime is very largely a disease, often hereditary like other forms of insanity, requiring analogous methods of treatment. The problem of criminology is being solved in the laboratories of the biologist, the sociologist, and the medical pathologist. But under existing conditions how little chance for new ideas to find expression in new methods! Our city prisons are still, too often, moral pest-houses of the vilest type; our seventeen thousand county jails, frequently seminaries of vice and crime; and many of our penitentiaries, triumphs of financial and sociological mismanagement. Within this very year inmates of a Western state prison have been done to death by inhuman keepers through tortures which would have brought credit to the rack in its palmy days; and all this, it has been well said, because of a "blind and brutish devotion to the fetish of party."² Are we proud of the fact that in our own country crime is increasing in proportion to the population; whereas, in Great Britain, under wiser methods of treatment, it has been steadily

¹ Of course, an accurate estimate is practically impossible; but the statement in the text is as likely to be under as above the truth. On the English Public Health Act, see Calkins, *Some Results of Sanitary Legislation in England since 1875: Pubs. Am. Statistical Association*, New Series, Vol. II, pp. 297-303.

² *New York Nation*, May 4, 1893, p. 336.

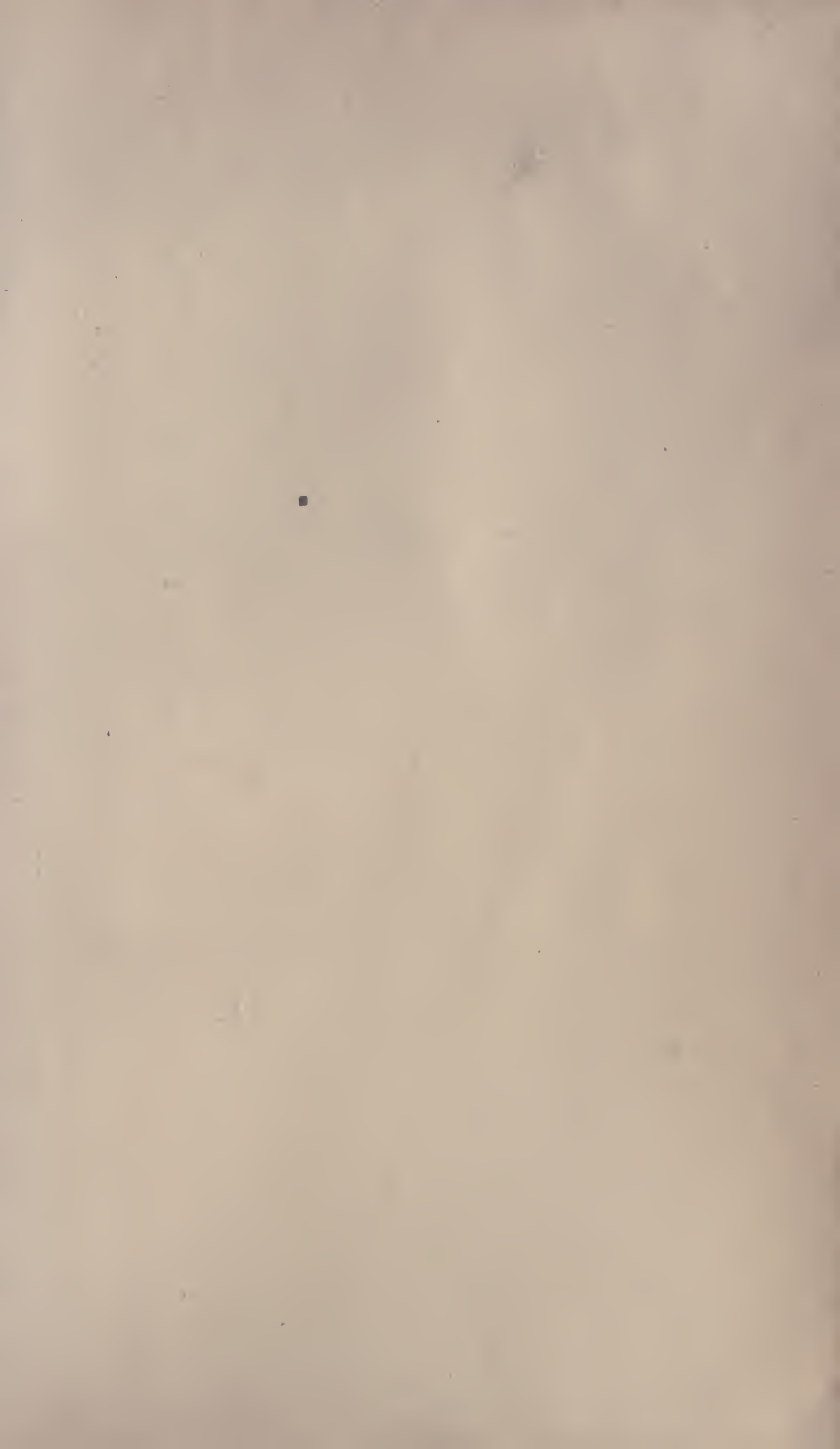
decreasing for twenty years? We have yet to learn that reformatories and industrial schools are a far better public investment than jails.

Social and political reform will be impossible without moral regeneration. The fact is, the American people need a tonic of the most active kind. Partly as a result of the spoils system and partly in consequence of the unnatural industrial and political conditions produced by the Civil War, we have been brought to a very low plane of public morality. "It is a familiar fact," says Herbert Spencer, "that the corporate conscience is ever inferior to the individual conscience." Indeed, it seems to me that a nation is in evil straits when the standard of public morality is very much lower than the standard of private morality; and that is precisely the case with the people of the United States. Never, perhaps, has there been a greater disparity between political and private ethics. A double system of morality is a dangerous possession for any nation. Our ideal of public conduct must approximate more nearly to our ideal of private conduct, if we would ever attain the best in the higher life.

The work of moral regeneration must necessarily begin with the individual. In it, therefore, the university has a noble part to perform. The ethical value of scientific training is too little appreciated. Scientific training begets right-mindedness. Straight thinking is the essential condition of straight acting. The trained mind is the best keeper of a clear conscience. The young man who has acquired a proper respect for right thinking, should he be called into his country's service, will resent the sophistries of sinister demagogues as insults to his intellectual manhood. I would prefer four years of study with the faithful teacher, humbly and reverently leading his pupil in the paths of knowledge, rigorous in his adherence to truth, daring on occasion to confess an error, to a lifetime of dogmatic ethics.

Members of the graduating class: You have now reached the hour of your most serious joy and, I trust also, of your

humblest pride. For never did young knight in days of chivalry look forward to deeds so arduous or to conquests half so beneficent as those which challenge you. There will be need of all the courage, self-sacrifice, and singleness of purpose which you possess. Mighty are the victories of peace. The brain of the trained philanthropist—and such is the disciple of true culture—may save more human lives, contrive more human happiness, than were ever sacrificed by any Napoleon whose cruel deeds a thoughtless world has glorified. True piety, said the stoic Emperor, consists in reverence for the gods and help to men. Therefore help men. Seek that spiritual utilitarianism whose creed is social perfection; and foster that intelligent patriotism which chastens because it loves.





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